nature net

The NatureKenya Newsletter www.naturekenya.org October 04

TALKS AT THE NATURE FAIR

Baobabs - Pachyderms of the Plant World
by Rupert Watson

Succulent Plants
by Prof. Len Newton

Pollinators
by Dino Martins

Programmes for sale will be available at the gate

Spread the word

Help distributing posters and flyers would be most appreciated please contact the office for these

MONTH AT A GLIMPSE

Sat 2	ASF Birdwalks & NRF walk
Sat 2 & Sun 3	Nature Fair
Sat 9	Tree Walk
Sun 17	Sunday Birdwalk
Mon 25	Tree Walk
Birdwalks every Wednesday Morning	
Bird ringing every Thursday Morning	

Editorial Team

Editor Catherine Ngarachu
Evening Skies Fleur Ng'weno
Naturalist's Corner Dino Martins

Nature Fair

Nairobi Arboretum

Sat 2 & Sun 3 October 04

Treat yourself to the Nature Fair

Come to this family fun weekend, to be held at the Nairobi Arboretum, organised by Nature Kenya.

RECEIVED 24 SEP 2004 LIBRARY

Featuring...

- Bats
- Live insects
- Wool spinning
- Children s activities
- Artwork from natural products
- Other Arts & Crafts

BirdLife world bird festival 2004

Activities

- Birdwalks
- Treewalks
- Insect walks
- Talks & Videos

Safaricom the better option

Kindly sponsored by Safaricom

Products

- Succulent plants display & sales
- Oils
- Herbs
- Binoculars

Entertainment

Community drama performances and the Black Marimba Cultural Dance Group

Celebrating nature and its contribution to the lives of people

NATURE KENYA, P. O. Box 44486, 00100 GPO Nairobi Tel: 3749957 / 3746090 Fax: 3741049 E-mail: office@naturekenya.org

EVENING (& morning) SKY

Moon, October 04

6 Oct Lost Quarter; 14 Oct New Moon; 21 Oct first Quarter; 28 Oct Full Moon

The Sun, Earth and our Moon are aligned in the early morning of October 28th, resulting in a total **lunar eclipse.** The almost-full moon rises at dusk on October 27, and the eclipse will last from about 2 or 3 a.m. to just before dawn on the 28th.

A lunar eclipse occurs when the earth passes directly between the sun and the full moon, costing its shadow on the moon. The only reason it doesn't happen every time there is a full moon is because the moon's orbit doesn't exactly coincide with the ecliptic, so the earth's shadow just misses the moon most times.

The event is not as dramatic as a solar eclipse; just look for a steody dimming in the brightness of the moon. An interesting point is that the earth's shadow does not produce a sharp edge, because the earth has an atmosphere, and any light passing the earth gets scattered.

The moon has no atmosphere to speak of, which is why at other times the normal shadows in the lunor craters are so clear - though a telescope this is strikingly apparent, one side is as dark as midnight while a step away there appears to be blazing sunshine! Total lunar eclipses occur at most 3 times a year and last up to 100 minutes. Partial lunar eclipses are about as common.

Stars. October 04

The fiery red eye of Scorpius is setting in the west. On 17th October, the new, crescent moon oppeors next to Antares. On the 18th, the crescent moon is near the scorpion's curving tail.

When the scorpion has disappeored, onother fiery-eyed giant called Taurus the Bull rises on the opposite horizon. According to the legends of ancient Greece, these fearsome mythical beasts did not get on well, and should they ever catch sight of each other who knows what may happen!

The constellation Sagittarius, the Archer, is in o good position for viewing in the southwest. The stors of Sagittarius form a teapot or kettle shape. The centre of our galaxy lies is this direction.

The brilliant star low in the northwest is Vega. Above Vega, high in the northwest, is the bright star Altair, between two fainter stars. The brilliant star low in the south-east is Achernar. Above it, high in the southern sky, is the bright star Fomalhaut.

Planets, October 04

Venus still shines brightly in the morning sky before dawn. Early in October, the star Regulus is nearby.

NATURALIST'S CORNER

Pandinus sp: Found in most Kenyan dry lands

SCORPIONS

By Samuel M Mwangi
email sammurache@yahoo.com

Scorpions are venomous arachnids (the same class as spiders, ticks and mites). They are often found in dry areas but also in many forests. The young are born alive and are carried by their mothers on the back, where they remain for a period of at least 2 weeks after birth. Depending on the species, the gestation period ranges from several months to 1.5 yrs. While in the female ovariuterus, the embryo obtains nutrients from their mother's digestive gland. A female gives birth to 25-35 juveniles. The mother makes a birth basket with her folded legs to catch them after birth and provide them with a means to climb to her back.

Over 1300 species ot scorpions have been described. Some species live up to 15 yrs, but most live 3 - 5 yrs. Scorpions have.an elongate body with q long segmented tail, with a sting on the tip. The sting is venomous and the toxicity vories from species to species. Scorpions hunt ot night ond hide under rocks, in the bark of trees, under deod logs or in burrows during the day. They feed on a variety of small insects, spiders, centipedes as well as other scorpions.

Scorpions locate their prey by sensing vibrations with sensory hairs and other organs. Scorpion venom contoins neurotoxins, toxins thot affect the nervous system. Scorpions use toxins for subduing their prey ond for their own defense. Their toxin con result in heart or respiratory failure in humons within hours after the sting, depending on the species. However, the stings of most species are poinful, but not deodly

IF YOU GET STUNG BY A SCORPION...

The world's most poisonous scorpions live in North Africa, S. America, India, Mexico and the Middle Eost. Most Africon scorpions are not considered dongerous to humons. The world's largest scorpion reaches a length of over 20cm and comes from South Africa *Hadogenes traglodytes*. In Kenya, members of the genera *Pandinus* and *Parabuthus* are the largest, reaching a length of 12cm.

Scorpions can inflict o very poinful sting, which is occompanied by a locol swelling. The pain may cause shock, which varies in severity depending on the victim.

Symptoms of a reaction to a scorpion sting include shallow respiration, weak and rapid pulse rate, abnormal body temperature, cold sweats and may look pale. In the rare cose thot the symptoms are severe, get the person to o doctor and odminister first oid, which includes immobilizing the victim. The head should be kept low by raising the feet. A warm drink like coffee or tea may be given to act as a stimulant. Depending on the severity of the symptoms, ortificial respiration may be administered. The victim should be taken to hospitol os quickly as possible. Supply the doctor with all the necessory informotion regording the incident. The scorpion that inflicted the sting should be coptured, if possible, for identification. This moy oid in the diognosis ond treotment.

action

RAPTORS WORLDWIDE

Just Published

Proceedings of the 6th World Conference on Birds of Prey and Owls
May 2003, Budapest, Hungary
Edited by R.D.Chancellor and B.-U. Meyburg

ISBN 963-86418-1-9

This volume of 890 pages features 81 outstanding refereed original papers in English, presented by over 150 authors from all over the world. It has an extensive section on vultures, severely threatened if not already extinct in many parts of their former range, comprising 12 papers on different Old and New World species and their conservation together with eight special studies providing a comprehensive picture of the recent catastrophic decline of species in the genus Gyps in Southern Asia, particularly India and Pakistan, the hitherto inexplicable cause of which was first revealed during this conference.

Other sections are devoted to such wide-ranging topics as Population Limitation, Taxonomy, Electrocutions, Raptor/Human Conflicts and Environmental Contaminants. Other special sections are devoted to Falcons and Eagles respectively, including accounts of the unrivalled conservation work carried out in Hungary on such endangered species as the Saker Falcon and Imperial Eagle, forming an object lesson for other countries.

TO ORDER RAPTORS WORLDWIDE WRITE TO:
World Working Group on Birds of Prey and Owls (WWGBP), P. O. Box 52,Towcester NN12 7ZW, England
E-mail:
robin.chancellor@virgin.net
www.raptors-international.de

SUCCULENTA

PLANT SALE

Nature Fair, Nairobi Arboretum
Sat 2 & Sun 3 October 04

Sale af succulents at the Nature Kenya Fair at the Nairabi Arbaretum; there will alsa be a talk by Len Newtan and faur tree walks!

SUPPER & BAOBAB TALK

Friday 3 December 04

Supper meeting at Julia Glen's and talk by Rupert Watson on Baobabs.
Please liaise with Julia Glen, tel 891065 ar 0722 756647 ar Sue Allan, tel 891190 ar 0733 891 721, befare the meeting.

City Park Greeting Cards

Featuring a beautiful painting of the band stand by Mary Collis. Available from the Nature Kenya front office @ 50/- each (blank on inside)

NEW Subscription rates take effect on 4th October 04. Please check on page 4

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regular activities

BIRD RINGING

Meet at the Museums' Nairobi Botanic Garden, at 7:00 a.m. every Thursday.

TREE WALKS

Guided tree walks in the Arboretum on the second Saturday and last Monday, i.e. **9 & 25 October from 9:30 a.m.** Meet at the Arboretum gate. *Those who are not members of FONA or Nature Kenya pay Ksh 100/- fee on arrival at the gate.*

WEDNESDAY MORNING BIRDWALKS

Bird watching walks at sites in and around Nairobi. Meet at the National Museum car park every Wednesday at 8:45 a.m. Return about 12:30 p.m. *Those who are not members can get temporary membership at Ksh 100 per birdwalk, payable on arrival at the car park.*

SUNDAY BIRDWATCH

Members meet at the National Museum, Nairobi car park at 9:00 a.m. the third Sunday of every month, **i.e. 17 October**. The members decide where to go. Bring lunch

Ngong Road Forest Walks (Nairobi)

Organised by the Ngong Road Forest Sanctuary Trust, nature walks are held on the first and third Saturdays of the month i.e. **2 & 16 October, at 9:00 a.m.** Meet at the stairs leading to the Restaurant at the Racecourse. Call Anthony Charo to confirm on 575207 or 0733 712406.

Lake Victoria Sunset Birders (Kisumu)

The Lake Victoria Sunset Birders are a Nature Kenya Site Support Group and organise bird walks at sites in and around Kisumu every Friday of the month. For further details call 057 42952 or email lakevictoriasunsetbirders@yahoo.co.uk

FFJ Bird Walk (Coast)

Friends of Fort Jesus birdwalks are held the third Saturday of each month, i.e. **16 October.** Please call Marlene Reid on (041) 491 648 to confirm

ARABUKO-SOKOKE (COAST)

The Saturday birdwatch with the Arabuko Sokoke Forest Guides Association is on the first Saturday of each month i.e. **2 October, at 6:30 a.m.** from the Visitor Centre, Gede. Cost 100/- per person. KWS fees now apply (100/- Citizens, 500/- Residents)

DECLARATION

Nature Kenya does not accept any responsibility whatsoever in respect of negligence of any of its staff, volunteers or members organising the outings/trips or for any loss, injury, death or damage to property.

Plan your weekend of other break to stay at the Kinangop Guest House

Perched on the Kinangop Plateau with incredible views across the Rift Valley, the farm combines tussock-grass pasture, indigenous forest, and attractive gardens. The guesthouse is comfortable and fully furnished. Visitors can enjoy hikes and walks on the farm or go further afield with local guides.

For more information, brochure and non-member rates please contact Nature Kenya.

Guest House rates: Day visit 350/-

MEMBER nos	Overnight	Weekend
1 to 2	4000/-	6500/-
3	4,900/-	7,400/-
4	5,800/-	8,300/-

Nature *Kenya*

Membership form

Yes! ☐ *Start* ☐ *Renew*

my Nature Kenya membership

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(**OPTIONAL** - but useful to us in planning)

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Age Bracket (tick) under 21( ) 21-35( ) 36-50( ) over 50( )

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Would you like us to share your contacts Yes/ NO

For Official Use Only Sub No. Recpt. No.

Mode Due Date Recpt Date

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Corporate	10000	
Corporate Plus	20000	
ADDITIONAL SUBSCRIPTIONS		
Kenya Birds **(tick to receive this free Bird magazine)**		
Journal of E.A. Natural History	1000	
Scopus (Ornithological Journal)	500	
World Birdwatch (the BirdLife International magazine)	1500	
Succulenta East Africa	400	
Friends of Nairobi Arboretum		
Single - 400/-, Student - 250/-, School or Club - 800/-		
DONATIONS ***Help us to do even more!***		
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Total		

If you live reside outside of Kenya please refer to www.naturekenya.org